

# THE RELIGION OF JESUS

ALBERT G. LAWSON



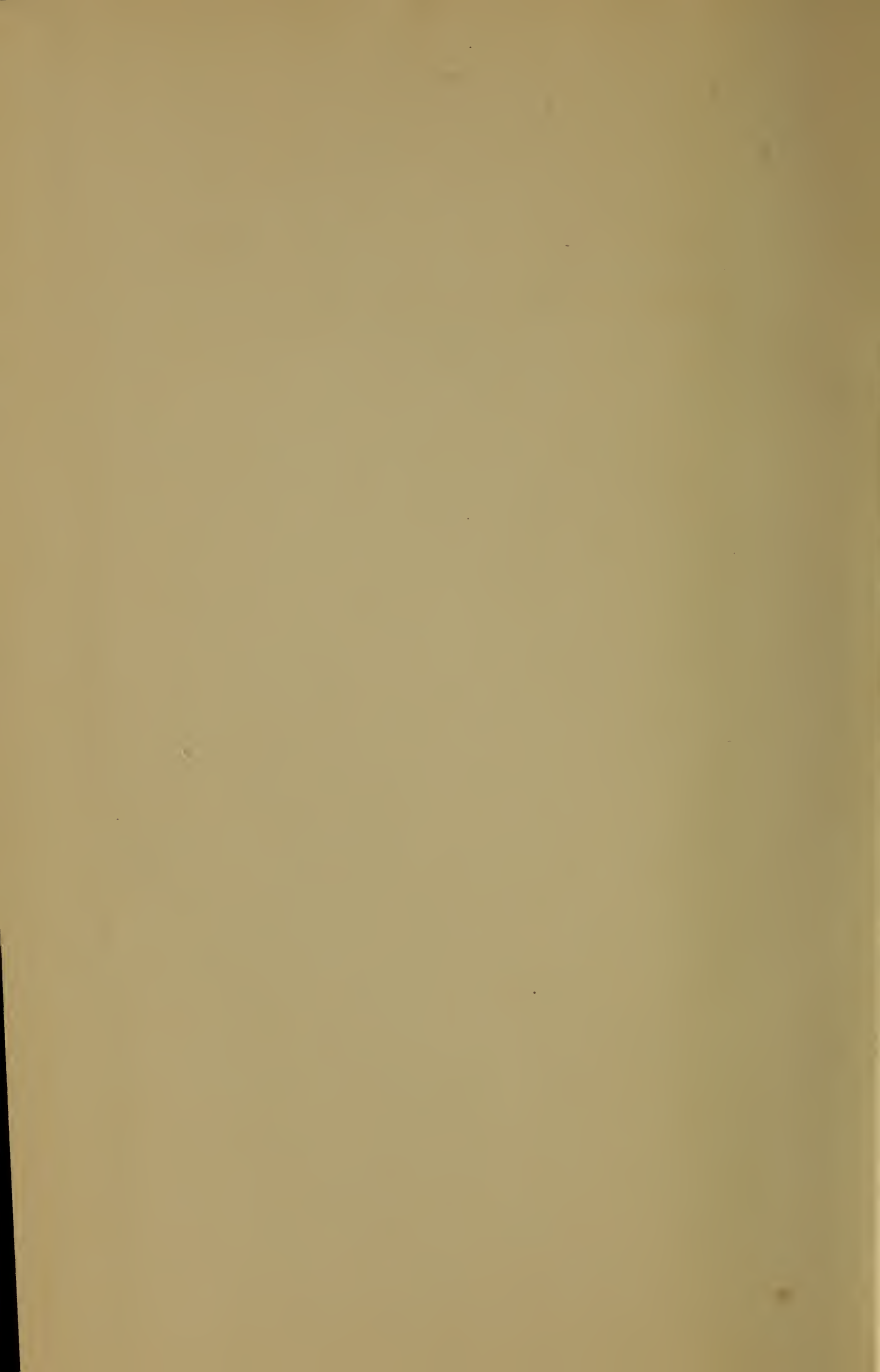
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**THE RELIGION OF JESUS**



# THE RELIGION OF JESUS

By  
ALBERT G. LAWSON  
*Galatin*

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PHILADELPHIA

THE JUDSON PRESS

BOSTON

CHICAGO

ST. LOUIS

LOS ANGELES

KANSAS CITY

SEATTLE

TORONTO

BR 121  
.L35

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Published December, 1920

JAN 25 1921

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no 1



MS 27 Jan. 1921

## PREFACE

PRESENTED on various occasions before Theological Seminaries and Ministers' Conferences, these papers are now put in permanent form in response to repeated requests.

Published as they are spoken, they include some repetitions. That they may be of genuine benefit to students of the religion of Jesus is the earnest hope of the writer.



## INTRODUCTION

It was my privilege to hear two of the addresses published in this volume. The personality of the speaker added charm to the word spoken, and the charm has not been lost in the word printed.

“The Religion of Jesus” is fitly the first of the series. Without it the other addresses could not have been conceived. The author treats the religion of Jesus descriptively, rather than historically and philosophically. He portrays graphically the inner experiences of Jesus Christ disclosed in the New Testament. The portrayal is in the form of meditation and prayer rather than of essay and exhortation. The impression upon the reader is to make him desire the author’s love for Christ and his gospel. Better Christians, better teachers, better preachers must be the fruitage of these addresses. All who heard these delivered, and all who read them, will be grateful to others who desired the publication for wide circulation.

MILTON G. EVANS.

CROZER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, Chester, Pa.

December 1, 1920.



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I

THE RELIGION OF JESUS





## THE RELIGION OF JESUS

**T**HIS is the day of inquiry. We dig up creeds to reach the sources of dogma, biting the thumb of authority as we dig. Can the real, the true, be found?

Two problems face us: Given a host of spiritual facts and truths far above our senses, and given a spirit at zero, now bring this spiritual world within the rim of my human spirit; that is, make the true about and above me truth and experience in me. Again, a young Jew, a worker in wood, a man of one book, the Hebrew writings, creates a body of religious truth assailed for centuries by fierce criticism which today, more clearly than ever, is showing itself to be the one universal religion. How did he get his religion? Who gave him his authority? What was his own faith?

Man, "incurably religious," is born to worship as the sparks fly upward; Jesus, the religious man, is the center of human history; religion is a life in right relation with God. In this right relation Jesus lives from Nazareth to Olivet, his great gift his life, its inner fountain his own religious experience. For self-conscious personality he is Master; as sure of his own unity as of the unity of God, his religion is his own, no man is echoed or held for a word.

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The boy, father to the man, with religious fervor says, "I must be in my Father's house"; the man with mature purpose, in his baptism, says, "Thus it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness." Religion his life-blood, goodness clothes him as naturally as his seamless coat. To pray, to eat, to do good, to undo evil natural for each act is the one thing to do. "Would ye also go away?" to the Twelve; "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" when the three lay in stupor as he lay in agony, are cries of deep human need. When legalism and superstition bind Israel in a worse than Roman bondage, with faith as clear as a child's he fasts, prays, worships, visits the sick, eats with rich or poor, preaches, teaches, and works in the simplest way possible. Natural and spiritual never separate entities to him, common things open heaven's door, the familiar is the divine, the ordinary the act of God in his religion. To be unnatural, unreal, is impossible with him; hence when scholars say, "The divine comedy soon passes into terrible tragedy," or of Tuesday, in Passion Week, "The one calm and undisturbed actor among all who took part in the tragic doings of that day," they drag him down to the level of men who make believe they are what they know they are not. Jesus marvels, weeps, is surprised, begs human sympathy, and one word explains it all—it is *genuine*. No scorn equals his scorn for the hypocrite. "Do the truth," says John, who saw Jesus live the truth among men. As faith's leader

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he believes, as faith's perfecter he perfects himself. Hence "we may safely argue from his life to his faith," for his religion is himself. When he can do no mighty work he " marvels," says frankly, "I do not know," "It is not for me to give," and speaks truth.

"Unite my heart to fear thy name," "We know not how to pray as we ought," are not applied to him; but when soul agony forces the cry, "What shall I say?" the words of sinful desire that tempt him, which he dare not speak, John writes down. The kingdom of evil being as real to him as the kingdom of God, temptation is more real and a more fiery trial than to us.

His religion is not theory but practice, not theology but truth, and truth not in ideas and ideals so much as in a helpful, matter-of-fact life. With him who went about doing good, ethics and religion are one, his service love and his love service, and ethical conduct the fruit of life, not life the fruit of ethical conduct. His works, notably those for the sinful, are open signs of soul throbs. To get best results we fix time, place, form, and often divorce religion from the ordinary; but he weds it to the common life, hence his religion, salt and light for the daily task, fits any time or place. With Matthew at the customs desk or with a widow at a funeral, with fishermen mending their nets or with a ruler praying for his child, with beggars at the roadside, with guests at a wedding or at the tables

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of the rich, his religion is a cup of blessing. Who can imagine contact with men where it would fail to do good? Is there a truer test for religion?

His religion is thorough! It reaches down to the minute deeds of a single hour, and dying he leaves nothing unfinished. His whole life, as his baptism, fulfils all righteousness, and going to the Father his righteousness becomes the Spirit's sword. When God's love and man's sin converging bind him to the cross, he manifests the paradox of plenty, for as the dying grain brings greater harvest his lifting-up draws all men to himself. "The permission of sin has cost God more than it has cost man," says Doctor Shedd in his rugged theology, and he is right. That the innocent must suffer with the guilty, and more than the guilty, and often, in vicarious love, must suffer for the guilty, a great law of the universe, is the principle of the Cross. Phillips Brooks says, "There is no principle involved in the atonement which is not involved in the most sacred relations between man and man," but Jesus alone fulfils this high law of heaven and earth. When he dies the Roman yoke and the slave-chain still gall men, but the force that breaks both is his religion. "Unto Cæsar his things, and unto God the things of God." Disciples remain true to that word, and Gibbon writes on the decline and fall of Rome, Greece arises "with the New Testament in her hand," and Lincoln sets free millions of slaves.

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“Man of sorrows” is not the best title for him whose first glory sign is at a wedding, whose religion is joy—a note not struck as it ought to be—whose mind, stayed on God, is kept “in perfect peace,” for perfect peace is unruffled content, unspeakable joy, one and the same at heart. His priestly prayer is “that they may have my joy made full in themselves.” Who lives by every word of God, his meat to do the will of God, his passion for God equaled only by his joy in God, who lives to bring God to men and men to God, must have full joy. Jesus is our joy-bringer! Christianity’s stream of song cannot rise above its source; its springs are in him. “Add” to your faith is “choir on,” a musical term, for his religion, rich with the joy of a redeeming purpose, creates our oratorios and so fills the soul that every new sacrifice is a new joy. In the olden time “when the burnt offering began, the song of Jehovah began also and the trumpets.” In the fulness of time, in evil’s dread hour, Jesus, choir-master in that upper room, sings on his way to the cross; facing death, he gives to his little flock his own peace, and blends into one the opposite elements of glory and shame.

How radical his religion! With one God and one temple Israel had kept the purest faith, yet now religion oscillates between Pharisees praying at street corners and hermits seeking the wilderness; legalism and officialism stifle morality but load heavy burdens and curses on the poor; the house



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of prayer is a den of thieves, and the religious leaders are whited sepulchers. With what sharp contrast Jesus shows mercy to the sinful, counts such happy as are poor in spirit, the meek, and they that hunger after righteousness, shares with publicans and sinners his food, calls such to be his disciples, and lays chief stress on motive and spirit! Independent of men and of institutions, he rends the tangled mesh of Talmudic tradition more swiftly than Samson broke his fetters. God-given institutions are less than the men to whom he gives them; ceasing to bring good to men and men to God, he breaks them as Hezekiah broke Moses' brazen serpent. Lord of the Sabbath, greater than the temple, above all priests or prophets, he is not self-dependent or self-satisfied as we use the terms. He, its spring and supply, shares the new life with every citizen of the kingdom.

"With the people and for the people" mirrors his entire course. As they are being baptized he comes also: John to the wilderness, but Jesus to the city, and when, according to his custom, he worships with the common people, our spiritual king wears no special dress. He chooses twelve plain men to be with him for prayer and work, calls them brethren, folds them in the shrine of heart confidence, fills them with his spirit, and lifts them out of provincial narrowness into world-wide vision and service.

His social worship exalts three principles: God

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has first right to all we are, gives us first right to all he is, and his children must bless those who have least, for he gives most to those who have most need. Jesus thinks in the concrete: the least truth is large that affects men—not goodness but the good man, not poverty but the poor man, not evil but the evil-doer moves him. Great moral leaders are not always what Jesus always was—gentle and tender. The heat of his love melts caste to whom a blind beggar's need is broad enough to show God's glory. "To the poor the gospel," spoken twice, he lives, in the open, every day. His highest work begins the lowest down, in foundations laid among the lowly, far and away beneath the level of the so-called best society. "The minor moral needs meet in him," for nothing is too small to be used in his service whose religion is so simple that plain men may follow.

Psychology and philosophy today urge the freedom of the moral agent and the immortality of the moral person—that the individual must have a knowledge of himself as a spiritual personality, that he must gain control of himself as a unit in society, and then give himself back as an organic part of the world's life, since character is the sum of our choices; but all this is written large in Jesus' religion. With intellect, emotions, and will the highest known, never moving out of harmony and always working at the flood, radical in speech but conservative in action, his religion shows limitless

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might kept in perfect control and used only for unselfish ends. Mental and moral qualities balance each other; man's strength and courage with woman's purity and tenderness blend into unity in him. He calls himself "meek and lowly"—discredited virtues—never brave or manly, as we call him, yet he inspires the highest courage and manhood. The great crystal palace of his gifts and powers is filled with harmony.

Prayer is a real test of the religious life. Who spends time communing with God saves time and himself; rich and poor, strong and weak meet together to grow in grace in "the democracy of prayer." Here Jesus is supreme! Work and rest, joy and trial, the grind of daily toil, the growth of enmity, and all his experiences are sweetened with prayer. Three times he hears his Father speak, each linked with prayer as are two other signs of the Father's favor. To know more of ourselves and not to know more of God brings fear and failure. We know the need of prayer; he knew also its luxury. The floodtide of popularity and the first of the ebb is sanctified by a night of prayer, and in that night he is transfigured.

Recall the lines traced: Jesus' religion is as natural as it is real, as practical as it is intense, as simple as it is supreme, as radical as it is strong, as self-sacrificing as it is holy, and as full of joy as it is of service; yet to show what it is does not explain how it is. Mystery will always surround



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Jesus' person and work, for his religion "essentially intelligible in its manifest simplicity is yet essentially unfathomable in its depth of meaning." We should be Christ-centered; true, but where was Christ centered? Can we learn the hidings of his power? Religious nature alone will not grow religious character; scribes and Pharisees with the nature did not grow the character. Men may have a religion of form, of sentiment, of beauty, like Herod, who heard John gladly and did many things but took off John's head at the whim of a dancing-girl. Impulse, reason, art, esthetics are not good cornerstones for religion.

Three forces shape his religion: the Father, the Spirit, the Scriptures. Jesus loves the Old Testament; his delight in the law of Jehovah is great; he saturates his mind with its thought, wields it as his sword in temptation, and through his example leads men to live not by bread alone but by every word of God. The Spirit is the one living bond between the Father and himself. The Spirit has everything in him, hence the prince of this world has nothing. Born of the Spirit, led of the Spirit, filled with the Spirit, his works credited to the Spirit, he makes the Spirit the sole executor of his last will and testament. Horizontal religions with creeds and councils for support dissolve and die, but his vertical religion, born from above, lives and triumphs forever. Fruit is the high court of appeal for life, but he perfects even the fruit of the Spirit.

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The Scriptures, the Spirit, the Father—but the greatest of these is the Father. To reveal God, first and last with him, at the center of his being, is the completest self-surrender. Hence his word, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself," teaches vastly more than self-denial. The order, first entire and unconditional surrender, then take up the cross in active service, and then follow him in sanctification, is illustrated in his word to the young ruler, "Sell everything, give to the poor, and then follow me." To have his religion we must have his principles.

An only son should show the likeness of his father. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," spoken first, not to Philip in the upper room, but on the highway at the height of the feast, to the crowd thronging to the temple, is not for dogma but an outburst of rich experience. His eye single, his heart pure, he sees God face to face; all he is and all he does is born of what God is and does. "The Father worketh and I work," "My meat is to do his will"—such obedience rests on perfect trust and love. "Not my will but thine" is the word of living unity and communion.

Communion with God does not begin at his baptism. In the eighteen silent years he finds himself and God also. The lad's word, "My Father," thought through, felt through, willed through, becomes part of his being. First things always first, on the Godward side of every question, some solved

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later, so quickly thought out in those earlier days, all he knows and all he is he fuses into one self-sacrificing purpose. "To seek and to save the lost," "to do the will of God," "to bear witness to the truth," are one, not many, and that one is to make his Father known. Like the sun in its strength, this dominant purpose shines forth, and he measures all things by it, for in heaven, as on earth, a noble life is the fruit of a noble ideal. The higher moral quality is not self-reliance but its opposite—faith, the trusting implicitly in another.

"Father" is the one name spoken when personal relations are concerned; in one record of three verses he says "Father" five times. "The Father is with me," "I in him and he in me," "I and my Father are one," are not for theological hair-splitting but the every-day joyous experiences of a soul rich toward God. Sure of his abode in the bosom of the Father when he says, "No one cometh to the Father but by me," his emphasis is on one word; men without knowing Jesus find God in nature, music, science, but no one comes to the Father without Jesus. Nicodemus and Cornelius know God but not the Father until Jesus is known. God is interpreted by fatherhood, but fatherhood is not fully known until the Son is born. The thought of God in those oft-used words, "My Father," ruled every moment of his ministry.

His religion may be shown in three words, "vision," "passion," "action." He goes about do-

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ing good in our visible world, but he lives and moves and has his being in the invisible world, for gravitation draws him up. He is not at his baptism "a man catching a glimpse of a divine meaning half revealed, half concealed, but rather a human spirit at whose very center God creatively awakens a new consciousness." Henceforth he looks into the face of the Father with unclouded vision and walks with him in soulful fellowship. "I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me," "No one knoweth the Son but the Father," "I am not alone, the Father is with me," "I do always those things which please him," sweet experiences of an ingenuous spirit conscious that nothing can separate him from his Father's love, flower forth in that high desire, "Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

A king without regalia,  
A god without the thunder

    . . . . .  
Ay a creator rent asunder  
From his first glory and cast away  
    On his own world.

Unhindered vision of God, unfailing love for man, and unceasing fidelity to both give clear views, purest character, dauntless courage, and eternal fruitage. The burden-bearing love of God for the lost burns in him like an altar-fire that cannot go

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out. To lead a sinful woman to his Father is more than to eat with his own band. Nor agony nor enmity could throw a shadow of doubt on the dial of his hope. "Himself from God he could not free." The Father's smile fails him only in one short hour, but his vision of the Father never fails, nor fades into the light of common day.

Sharer with God and man, the true daysman tests his love to God by his love to man, how near he is to God by his nearness to man, and how much God is in him by the power for good he brings into the world. "A year of obscurity, a year of public favor, a year of opposition, and in one day death," is the human record of a ministry which, as our true tree of life, brings forth fruit every day. No respecter of persons that he may be brother to every man, poor yet making many rich, he

Lived with God in such untroubled love  
And clear confiding, as a child on whom  
The Father's face had never yet but smiled ;  
And with men even, in such harmony  
Of brotherhood, that whatsoever spark  
Of pure and true in any human heart  
Flickered and lived, it burned itself toward  
Him.

His religion shows the ideal religious life, since to live as he lived and to love as he loved is the highest life possible on the floor of earth. "When humanity, like fruit too heavy for the stalk it hangs on, is dragged to the dust by its own weight," Jesus



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comes to lift man up again to God. The most perfect man known to men lives to serve, not to be served. "He could do justice to men because he loved them so." When he knows his hour is come to take a towel and gird himself and wash his disciples' feet, from Peter to Judas, he puts into the concrete the whole Sermon on the Mount. "Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God" seems to sum up all his life in one religious act. "In the van of twenty centuries, with unwearied feet he goes about today doing good."

The worth of his religion is above price. He comes from God, but must know release from evil, communion with God, and devotion to his will by human experience. What he thus knows—and there were crises in his experience who grew in grace, who learned obedience, who was made perfect by sufferings, who says the Father has yet greater things to show me—what he thinks and speaks, what he does and is—that is the core of Christianity. If his life is history's holy of holies, his religion is the Shekinah glory in that holy of holies. No religious leader ever taught or lived so little that was transient and "so much that was timeless and eternal," hence "the literature of the world holds no doctrine so limited in bulk, so limitless in meaning and service as the gospel record of Jesus."

Two great notes arise out of his experience—authority and completeness. His a religion of cer-

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tainties, he makes known eternal realities: he has no doubt as to himself or the Father or the triumph of his gospel. He knows hatred will assail his truth, but he also knows nothing can arrest the moral force he sets free; the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. Sure of what lives beyond, he says, "It is for you I go and for you I will come again." That one deed will be told to the end of the age wherever the gospel goes. The will of God is done in him as it is done in heaven, hence his religion, practical and permanent, is the absolute and final religion, for it makes known that which is. The life of God present in him is reproduced in us; the love of God abiding in him is awakened and made effective in us. It is the right life, for the all-righteousness is lived in the character that men ought to bear. It is the power of God unto salvation, for it actually saves men, makes them whole, brings to pass what ought to be, since it is not something done for us so much as something done in us that saves.<sup>1</sup> He unlocks the infinite fulness of God and exalts the infinite capacities of man. The source of deathless power in him, his own religious experience reveals a whole being and a whole life at one with the soul's highest vision of God.

Whatever was "emptied" when the Word became flesh, the elements of constitution common to God and man were kept, for Jesus has the ideal potentiality set up in the original constitution. He

<sup>1</sup> Abridged from William Newton Clarke.

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taught Nicodemus heavenly things. The ascent of man by the descent of the Son of Man begins by the inflow of life from above, and at its height men become partakers of the divine nature. Since goodness and virtue and moral standards are one to God and the normal man, good and evil the same to both, religion is not only possible but fundamental. If good and evil were one to man and another to God, we could have no certainty in morals and there could be no religion. The real character of God and the right character of man shown in one person fix the unity of the moral standards in both, and Jesus is the final proof of their oneness for time and eternity. Jesus does not move among men as an automaton; it is not from device or contrivance that he lives and works, but from the inner necessities of his being. He is a giver and a lover from the beginning, for this is God's way to man and man's way to God, and the two facts, the height of the infinite God above the finite man and the image of the infinite Father in the finite Son, make a religious life the most glorious life possible. He who coined the terms "The Galilean vagabond" and "The ugly little Jew," a thinking man is capable also of saying "My Lord and my God," "For me to live is Christ."

To assail the authority of Jesus is to sow anarchy; sown here, it will waft its seeds everywhere, and that day will return, once tried in Israel, when "every man did that which was right in his own



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eyes," though history does not commend the fruit very highly. He who has nothing above his own inner light stands at the level of Nicodemus; to him Jesus is merely a teacher sent from God. Peter knows more who says, "We have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God." John knows more who says, "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing ye may have life in his name," for Jesus does not give rules of life but life itself. Unto the end of the ages will men say, "In him is life, and the life is the light of the world."

Jesus knew himself to be the one interpreter of God, the one mediator between God and men, and we are to live as he lived. Truth revealed to him takes full possession and is so wrought into his own being that he says, "I am the truth, I am the life," and higher sayings even he does not utter.

Did Jesus have two standards of religion, one for himself and another for us? No, God cannot have two standards. Yet he does not confess sin, make quest for salvation, or pray for pardon. That religion is not a stop-gap for guilt, evoked because sin came into the world, is one of the chief signs in his religion. Personal sin is not necessary to the best knowledge of God or to the best manhood, for who knew God as he knew him? Religion is in the nature of things, its deepest cause in the nature of God, and its deepest need in the nature of man. The more normal we are the more Christian we shall be, is the showing of his life. He who lives

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sinless among the sinful never speculates about sin, has clearest concepts of it, and most severely condemns it, the seventh chapter of Romans being inconceivable in his experience; yet sin is to no one so actual and awful a fact as to him who gave his life to destroy it.

We sin and fall short of the glory of God, he ceases not to keep that glory; we know more than we practise, he practises all he knows, the one being who lives abreast of his ideals. The first duty of those who turn away is to return to God. He who omits nothing he should do and does nothing he should not do—how can he turn? Heaven is always present, not future, nearer than Bethany to him. When in his own synagogue of Nazareth his service is lost in a dead sea of ingratitude, he looks from without to the inner light of an approving conscience. "He speaks always from within," yet no word spoken of his life is so fruitful as the life itself, and his own experience is his great gift. Virtue is always going forth from him. His heart is the home of the perfect and the permanent, his broken heart the fountain of sin and uncleanness. His religion is not because he is the Messiah—he is the Messiah because his life of right relation with God from first to last is without flaw. At his birth, religion was another name for fears and blood and power, for priesthood and superstition. God was a name to excite dread. He was an absentee God. At his death, truth and love, joy and peace meet to-

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gether. God is in all things. Henceforth, God lives with men; in the lowliest as in the highest human experiences and conditions God is always present. Religion cannot again be chiefly a matter of relation to law or race or government; it is essentially a relation of persons. He suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Personal faith in a personal God wrought out in heart experience is our sheet-anchor.

His religion in its deepest vision of truth and its most spiritual methods is our goal. The upward calling of God is in Christ Jesus. Christ formed in us, his thought, his will, his spirit living in us is our hope of glory. As the image thus formed shines through the man like light through glass, so he, the sun of righteousness, transmits his light downward through the centuries and outward to the remotest corners of the world. Henceforth it is less what generation a man lives in and more what the generative power of the man who lives. Even Renan could say, "Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed." Humanity slowly advances toward him in religious living, but he is and ever must be the one great captain and leader. The signs he works are forever less than the sign he is. God makes new wheat out of old wheat, out of one grain not only a new body but a hundredfold other bodies like unto it. So Jesus multiplies the seed, the word of God, and one sentence of his has wrought a greater harvest than

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the seven full years brought to the granaries of Egypt. The seed stores of the fourfold Gospel produce the great book harvest which fills the libraries of Christendom, but the religion of Jesus is the life of the seed.

So familiar is the story that we often fail to see its amazing wonder. Think a moment. A plain man, in a Syrian village, who died centuries ago, is, in this twentieth century, the embodiment of conscience for the whole world. In a world always evolving morality no one ever catches up with him. "Abreast of all the centuries, he is the pathbreaker of mankind. He incarnates the light and truth by which I live today because he cross-sectioned life where it touches God." He is the highest I know, and by the highest I interpret God. As the alabaster box filled the house with its perfume, so the religion of Jesus is yet to fill the world with its perfume of holiness through lives of utmost suffering often, yet so held in the right relation with God as to enjoy full assurance of transcendent glory.

**II**

**DISCIPLES AND APOSTLES**





## DISCIPLES AND APOSTLES<sup>1</sup>

TO Jesus the earth is a house of God, its hills and rocks are nature-altars where at any time he may find the Father. On a certain night, as his custom was, he went up the hill; a night of prayer equips him for a day of toil, and coming down to the plain he chooses twelve apostles. In his great prayer he said more than once, "Thou gavest them to me"; was it in that night they were given, and did he talk with the Father about John and Peter? That which is natural is first, then that which is spiritual. There is a natural history of Christianity and of Christian activities. Religion is kept alive on the street, not in the cloister, not with John in the wilderness, but with Jesus going about the towns and cities. You remember the motto: *Jesus alone can save the world, but Jesus cannot save the world alone.* Going about Galilee preaching, teaching, and healing, the people crowd upon him, and so many calls come from other places, he summons helpers. "It was in those days that he went off to the hillside to pray. He spent the whole night in prayer to God, and when the day broke he summoned his disciples, choosing twelve of them, to whom he gave the names of apostles" (Moffatt's

<sup>1</sup> Sermon preached on Day of Prayer for Schools and Colleges, February 22, 1917, in the Crozer Seminary Chapel, Upland, Pa.

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translation of Luke 6 : 12, 13). He uses what is to bring forth what is to be; out of the best of the present builds the highest for the future.

We condemn usually by wholesale, "all have sinned," but we promote individuals, and Jesus himself gives the name "apostle," missionary. Missive, missile, mission, missionary, have one root, and the missionary may be regarded as sent forth, thrust forth, hurled forth into the work of the kingdom. Apostle spells advance, aggressiveness, achievement. This verse as a cluster from Eschol exceeding rich in truth, contains far more than we can present in one address.

Are we disciples or apostles? There may be a great difference between the disciples of Jesus and the apostles of Christ. When he is deserted by disciples, his heart-cry is to his apostles, "Will ye also go away?" A disciple may be a sponge, but an apostle must serve; a disciple may keep his nets, but an apostle leaves his boats and nets; a disciple may be selfish, but an apostle must have

Room to deny himself, a path  
To bring him daily nearer God.

He finds his life in losing it; a disciple may know much about Jesus; but an apostle must be able to witness with Paul, "For me to live is Christ," "He lives in me, the hope of glory." A disciple may imitate and, that, another disciple; but an apostle must assimilate, incarnate, and reproduce what is



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given. Liberty and promotion are bills receivable whose exchange value is not so much of knowledge as of power in service. Apostles are trustees with power; special work is expected, but special opportunity and special graces are given. They may have honor, but they must have life and fruit; it is the choice disciple who is chosen to be an apostle. Jesus unfolds the authority and the contagion of life; "I in you and you in me" is spiritual biology.

"Freely ye have received, freely give." What man does for man is on a basis of parity, it is give and take, but on Christ's part it is all giving; for truth is given that it may be given forth. A real sermon is a living deed, its truths meet our needs and quicken our spirits. He who has, will have, and giving freely will increase what he has. It is the best of the inner life that flowers out for the enriching of other lives. Effluence and influence are brothers close as Siamese twins; the death of either kills the other. Andrew illustrates both in bringing Simon, his brother, to Jesus, for we know Him fully for ourselves only as we bring others to know and enjoy him.

"I have chosen you and placed you" is a great witness to faith. To faith, I say, not of the men chosen, for they knew not what spirit they were of, but the faith of Jesus who chose them. It is worth vastly more to have God believe in me than that I should have faith in him. Henceforth poor men from among the common people may render highest ser-

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vice to the church and the world. The people see little in these men, and we see little, at first, of the power the world needs, yet in these plain men, narrow men, Galilean provincials, Jesus finds captains for the most wonderful crusade ever planned. It is clear that grace is more than gifts when men of Galilee can turn the world upside down. We know little of their history, yet one third of them came to honor, and Paul, a good judge of men, salutes some of them as "pillars." Fishermen of Galilee have their names written in the book of God's purpose for world conquests. Your life is not only a plan of God but a plan of God for Christ and you and the world. An upper room in Jerusalem once held the full company of these crusaders. Edward Everett's famous challenge for the Pilgrims is answered by these humble Christians who front the world for Christ and the church.

Religion gains the rights, feeds the faculties, and guides the progress of mankind, and there is a theology of discovery and invention as well as of doctrine. God's book of appointments records blueprints for world building, yet it is not by rule that we live and work. Obedience may be forced until it sinks into mere automatism and the most legal conduct produces the most immoral character. A man may say "in whom we live and move" and continue to be a bad man. When education hardens into rigid rules, the more we are taught to know the less we are likely to do and to be. Jesus gives

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spirit and life, teaches by example, and puts the apostles to work under his own eye. We are not to follow rules of faith and practice, but a living Lord, whose kingly spirit reigns in our souls; not so much to defend a faith as to transmute faith into character and fitness for service. The living experience of the soul certifies to his indwelling. Who do the truth know the truth. Who keep his words know his love. "Lo, I am with you always" is not only promise but fact.

In his parable the good seed of one verse is in the next verse the sons of the kingdom; the word is the life. Because we are akin to God and can grow, we are trained and are worth the training. Brotherhood in need and in ability is grounded in the Father's supply and gracious purpose for our unfolding. It pleases God to reveal his Son in us the source and substance of our equipment.

Chosen to be "with him" is the graphic word of Mark as the earlier chronicler wrote of some who were "with the king for his work." Apostles are Christ's Comrades of Service, his Beneficent Brotherhood. We sharpen our sickles to cut grass, for iron sharpeneth iron, much more the countenance of a man his friend, and infinitely more the heart of the Lord the hearts of the men of his choice. With him to be trained into personal and communal enriching; individual work and team-work are both provided for and expected. Thus are disciples transformed into apostles.

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His apostles have new names, new natures, new destiny, new training until we are able to see that their larger life has lifted them out of the flood of current tendencies on to the high plateau of divine causes and purposes. A physician must know the disease and the remedy but also the body in which both are at work. Jesus knew sin and salvation as well as man and the world in which both were working when he chose the twelve plain Galileans to be his apostles. Men who drift with the tides of tendency, who are reading today's news to find texts for tomorrow's sermons are not likely to be trusted with large commissions for the kingdom of God. Men who sing only of sweetness and light or chirp softly of the humanities, are not those who turn the world upside down. Jesus, knowing that he had come forth from God and was going to God, stands before them, and takes not a sword, not a scepter, but a towel, and girds himself to serve even Simon and Judas.

Jesus sets the standard for greatness; he that would be great among you let him be your minister. He came to serve, not to be served, and to give his life a ransom for many. It is the sacrifice that consumes the sin and satisfies the soul, the ministry of generous self-suppression that paves the way to the greatness of self-enrichment and world-wide exaltation. The only fruitful thing is sacrifice. "The king alone can make the kingdom; to be slaves of Christ, the King of kings, is to be masters of every fate."



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One great law of humanity, of the universe, and of the being of God is written large in his life—the innocent suffer with the guilty, and more than the guilty, and often for the guilty. When we renounce ourselves, the life and love of God pour into our souls, for the river of God is always full. When the highest work begins the lowest down, the flood-gates of joy are opened to the soul even as “when the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets.” Men long for horizon, and Jesus gives expansion, liberty, spaciousness, hope, and wondrous honor. Apostles become ambassadors for God! Their personal authority is in the personal authority of the Christ.

Oh, the height of the riches of the wisdom and goodness of our God that we may be laborers together with him! That never means less work, but more; work all the more because God is our partner. Who ever wrought as Jesus did? Set free to serve, and when we have served well, we are promoted to higher and more difficult service for our reward. They are worthy to rule who have learned to serve, and the more spiritual we are, the more we are his servants.

It is for the future they are chosen. The citizenship of tomorrow is in the streets and the schools of today, and the ministry of tomorrow is in the churches and the schools of today. Is it to be a higher citizenship and a higher ministry? That depends largely upon how you and I behave. Serving

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well our own generation we shall be doing the best for the next and the coming generations. Faith in God is kept by keeping faith with God, for commission and character go together.

Truth crushed to earth will rise again; yes, but how does truth get up? When some man or woman comes along filled with the love of truth, and at the risk of social ostracism, of every kind of opposition, perhaps of persecution and death, picks up the truth, holds it aloft, and carries it forward to victory. Bruno and Galileo, John Howard and Elizabeth Fry, and, yet nearer to us, Florence Nightingale, Neal Dow, John B. Gough, and Frances Willard, vindicate this fact. Truth is strong and overarches every generation, but truth plus personality is stronger. In the sphere of religion it is sometimes more difficult to live than to die. It is certainly true that Paul found it so, as he tells the Philippians.

Ambassadors have authority. He that receiveth you receiveth me. Jesus himself is the giver and the goal of their highest hopes. It has been well said: "Christianity, in its broadest definition, is simply the reality of things. It is a setting forth of the true order of humanity." The truths committed to apostles are realities; God and man, heaven and hell, sin and salvation, truth and error, conscience and reason are realities. Jesus and his work, the resources and the fruits of his life, are realities. Sum them all up, and you have the reality of redemption, the reality of present resources, and the reality of

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future glory, and these are foundations which cannot be shaken. Religion has its immediacy, "He that believeth hath everlasting life," but more its forthcoming glories out of "the vast far-stretching reaches into the eternities." This is life eternal, to know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. Christian optimism is "the permanent post of the spirit" at home with Christ.

God seeks men, not creeds or books or buildings or altars, but men. As Doctor Gordon used to say, "The world needs not more men, but more Man," and man is permanent only in what most makes him man. Manhood is real and life is real as faith and hope are real, and the realities Jesus brings may be trusted to control our forms and methods of operation. Certain men have somewhat of their authority in a ring they wear, but I can think that Paul's chain was worth more to him than any ring ever worn by an ecclesiastic, for that chain bound him to the Pretorian guard, and by that chain Paul entered even into Cæsar's household. Peter's big hands, his boats and nets are not more real than his new name and growing character. One touch of the hem of the robe heals because Jesus is inside the robe. Wear a robe and a ring if you will, but be a *man* inside them both; preach in a church with its dim religious light, if you must, but do not let the dim religious light get into your preaching. Failures are not from that which is without but from inward spiritual evaporation and decay; some

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men who complain bitterly of the dead-line were dead before they ever touched the line. Truth, purity, love, hope, and joy live today brighter than ever, and Jesus in whom they have their spring and perfectness lives and reigns today more royally than on that earlier morning in Galilee. Guerrilla chiefs prance up and down, would-be prophets make silly ventures, and some are disquieted; but He who lighteth every man coming into the world is God with us and in us all the days, for the saving of the world.

Jesus is the man of the imperial intellect, of the imperial heart, and of the imperial will, and he chooses us because we also can think and feel and do. To train the will for character and the intellect for insight is good; better still is it to fuse the two into one, for a man finds himself not by "thinking but by doing."

Who wants faith at the cost of honest and clear thinking? To fall in love with our own thinking crowds out the thoughts of God, so dear to the psalmist, and one may become so vain of his own mind as to leave no room for the mind of Christ. Intellectual integrity is better than intellectual culture, but having both, melt them with spiritual fire; then though poor we may make many rich, and having nothing may possess all things.

We are wholly dependent on God, for without him we can do nothing. The other side is also true, for God can do nothing for us or through us for



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others without our willing surrender to him. The potter is more than the clay, but the potter can do nothing without the clay. Noah's ark is not built without Noah or Abram's altars without Abram. Jesus uses water to make the wine and the five barley loaves to feed the multitude. The power to think and feel and do brings us into debt to God to think clearly and correctly, feel deeply and steadily, work earnestly and determinedly and to bring forth abundant fruit if we would be meet for the Master's use. Jesus welcomes differences among his disciples. It is almost like romance when Matthew the publican and Simon the zealot are workers in comradeship. He calls them because they differ, and then knits them into unity, but he must have a disciple to start with or he cannot have an apostle.

We belong to Christ, and when he has full control, even "dispositions are powers, positive forces, vitalizing the common life of man" and preventing "the perilous leakage" of spirituality. We will have boldness concerning spiritual realities and blend "with every mode of the consecrated spirit the mighty energy of God." Wait upon God until he kneads the truth into the whole being, for the most precious gift may be held by us apart from the inner life. Pride is not the only thing that puffeth up. To thirst for him as the hart for the water brooks, to have no higher desire than that of unity with him, praying steadily, "Unite my heart to

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do thy will," to live and move and have our being in him as the quick experience of the soul, this is life indeed.

It is written, "He gave them power," and again it is written, "As the Father sent me, even so I send you; and he breathed on them saying, 'Receive ye the Holy Spirit.'" The Spirit brings fire into the soul even as with Moses the fire of the bush ever after burned in his being. And what is fire? It has three constituents, light, heat, and motion, and these transmuted into mental and spiritual energies become Vision, Passion, and Action. Moses endured as seeing Him who is invisible; prophets and apostles had power as they looked upon the invisible God. Upon all with which we have to do we must bring to bear the light of eternity, be not content with ideas but crave ideals. Aaron Burr had ideas a plenty; but Lincoln had ideals also which were a lamp unto his feet and a light unto his path. Vision soon passes into vocation; it is the man who has seen God who goes out urgently even though he knows not whither he goes, and our Lord for the joy set before him endured the cross. Newton blowing soap-bubbles, and Cyrus W. Field spending months as a hermit in the forests of Newfoundland, had visions of coming glories for God and man when their ideals should pass into principles and practices for the welfare of the world. Some men brilliant, eloquent, scholarly, "seeing many things observe not," the vision

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of God leaves no imprint on their souls or their faces, and the hearts of men burn not as they preach or teach.

With vision must be passion; how wonderful Moses' life at this point. A man who can pray, "Show me thy glory; blot me out of thy book; a prophet like unto me shall God raise up," seems to live alongside of Paul whose sign manual "In Christ" certifies that he has the right to cry out, "I live, yet not I, Christ lives in me." It is the constraint of love that makes it possible for him to say, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren." To eat his flesh and to drink his blood is more than to follow in his steps. It is not imitation so much as it is assimilation that we need. The old-time word, "the fire of the altar shall not go out," is witnessed today in every synagogue throughout the world; so also in the temples of the Spirit should abide the burning heart, as the energy we need in work and worship. Moses "endured"; vision and passion were wrought into action. So apostles filled with the Spirit were always men of action, the most prodigious workers the world contained. He who went about doing good, lived and served anew in them.

The greatest agency we have within our power is prayer. No man has ever wrought an outstanding work for God who was not a man of prayer; the greater the work the greater the life of prayer. "Who through the eternal spirit offered himself

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an unblemished sacrifice unto God"—it is as if the whole life were gathered up into one act. Prayer was to Him as the normal expression of his whole being; he was not only wont to pray, but he without ceasing prayed. His unbroken fellowship with the Father was only mated by his unutterable love to man. Eminent teachers have lately said that Jesus did not need to pray. I do not believe a word of that. It overlooks the foundation fact that Jesus was not in the habit of doing what he did not need to do. It is better to say, "He prayed with all his might and hurled his life after his prayer." And the other fact, quite as important, that prayer is a service of much wider scope, a field of greater extent than most men have yet explored.

As the cool spring of the hillside sustains life in the suffocating heat of the valley, so prayer is the fountain of refreshing that fills the soul with spiritual energy. It is a source of perpetual power for the needs of the spirit. Paul makes a wonderful statement of prayer and the Holy Spirit in a quite unused but most remarkable personal experience: "For I know that this" (bonds, factions, the whole trial of the earlier part of the chapter), "I know that this shall turn out to my salvation, through your supplications and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1 : 19). It is the only time the Spirit has that title, the only time his life-giving service is spoken of as a steady flowing into our souls, as the water flows into our homes, and then



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with that is joined the praying of young, almost untrained disciples. Philippians become indeed fellow citizens of the commonwealth of God when praying with and for Paul. Was ever higher tribute given to ordinary prayer?

To Paul it was no "wave of golden mist athwart the sky," but rather as in "wondrous barter he exchanged a dead self for a living Christ." Here we gain the power to see and the courage to do the will of God. God never does for us what we can do for ourselves. The man of prayer is the man of power. Doctor Strong says men came from the college to him who "could tell their whole experience without once naming sin or Christ." What do such men know of prayer? It is a battle-field where many a giant is laid low and we are given the victory. It is often a duel between lust and love. Prayer melts chains that hammers and anvils could not break. Study may make scholars, but saints are made through prayer. Havelock's saints won their victories first on their knees; the knee-drill of the Salvation Army brings the courage required for their lads and lassies in the personal, practical work of the street. The heat of intercession melts the proud heart, and kneeling in prayer makes good kindling for a burning heart. Good men do not always show good sense; my scythe has often seemed good, but the work done was not good, for I had failed to whet my scythe. Go through your closets to your services one and all, and especially to your preach-

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ing. Power with men for God is the fruit of power with God for men; therefore speak with God ere you speak to men, and speak with him ere you assume to speak for him. Have no fear that we will draw too near to God or that Christ will get too strong a hold upon our hearts.

Not *what* we ask, but *why* and *how* are the more important. It is an old jingle, but it has a good lesson,

Prayers and praises go in pairs—  
They have praises who have prayers.

Mankind could ill afford to lose all the art, the literature, the science of Greece and Rome and of the earlier Eastern nations, yet the prophets of Israel and the apostles of Christ have bequeathed a vastly richer heritage to men. Their writings and experiences are the treasure-trove of power, the seed-bins of harvests for all time. The world's Greathearts have not surpassed their vision, passion, and action. Knowing how to pray, they became conquerors, and no group of workers in any other field of human welfare have wrought more and more worthily for God and man. Prayer creates optimism, and here they shine as stars whose light will never know eclipse.

Bunyan's thought of Jerusalem sinners and the devil's castaways illustrates Paul's "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The world's discarded waste is God's raw material for

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some of his saints. The redemptive purpose of God is not a patchwork put together after the rent appeared; it had its birth in the far distant eternities, or ever the foundations of the earth were laid or the balancings of the clouds were known. To Paul and the apostles this purpose was as an atmosphere in which all thoughts and desires and doings had their enriching and sustaining breath. It is not a sudden summer shower, but through the dark background and abyss of sin this eternal purpose pours in floods of grace and glory. To these men of God the base, the despised, the things that are nothing, are clothed with light; the dead in sin are to stand in the presence of God without any spot or wrinkle. Visions of the coming glory inspire songs of victory. Paul is the preeminent optimist, his "conception of life is amazingly rich in friendly dynamics." "To live is Christ, to die is gain, to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord," and these are more real to him than the chains on his hands and feet or the solid earth on which he treads. He is the color-bearer of the apostolic company, easily the foremost man "with the upward look," always rejoicing in hope. And through all his earthly toil faith, hope, love, prayer, one and all work; God works in while he works out, and he is girt on every side by the things that work together for good.

The glory of Christianity is not in its past. We do well to follow Paul as he followed Christ, but we cannot return even to the apostles for our types

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of service; every generation must frame its own methods of attack and defense. They have their portion now in that cloud of witnesses of which he wrote. We can and ought to do all things through Christ. If captains of earth's foremost workers count upon the fixedness of nature and her inexhaustible resources when they look forward, much more ministers of grace should count upon our covenant-keeping God and the unsearchable riches of Christ. More light is yet to break out from the word of the Lord; his assurance of "greater works" to be done, of "all truth" to be opened, has not yet been fulfilled. Is it reserved for this twentieth century to rejoice in all these marvels of God accomplished?

I look for refreshing from the Lord in the rescue of multitudes and in their building up unto him, for missionary zeal far and away beyond what any man or age has yet revealed, for beneficence that shall become Christians in a day of prosperity, for evangelistic education and educated evangelism known of all as the two arms of active Christians, for preachers worthy also to be called "golden-mouthed," like the beloved Judson whose "artful artlessness or artless artfulness" was always sanctified to the Christ unto whom he gave his life, and who shall be winners of souls beyond a Wesley or a Spurgeon, and for the day when all who confess Christ shall be examples to them that believe in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity.



**III**

**A COMPLETED MINISTRY**



## A COMPLETED MINISTRY

PAUL sums up his advice coveting completeness for Timothy—a choice but timid spirit who needs a higher estimate of himself and of his work—in the words “Complete thy ministry.” True self-respect commands others’ real respect. Aiming to magnify the office, our self-esteem yoked with self-indulgence and surpassed only by ignorance of the pride that lurks within, we may end by magnifying ourselves.

Beware of too sublime a sense  
Of your own worth and consequence.

If we count ourselves really helpless, we have a dynamic of untold power ready to our use, “for it is just when I am frail that I am truly strong.” The inner man may thrive when the outer man shrinks, the body move from strong to weak while the soul moves from weak to strong. Becoming old in years may be growing young in spirit and life, for truth and the soul have no gray hairs.

The virtue of the veteran puts new vigor into the young soldier. Paul the aged, the prisoner of the Lord, is writing; his cold body sorely needs the cloak left at Troas, but he writes with a hot heart. The fire of Paul’s great soul burns in his

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prison letters even after many years, and multitudes of Christians walk in its light today. Yea, many walk in light kindled by sparks from men's souls called "fools" in their own generation. He who is about to die salutes; it is the superb salute of a shackled hand. "Timothy, my child, my work is done; I am as wine about to be poured on the altar, as a ship putting out to sea, as a wrestler whose race is run, as a soldier who has kept his oath of loyalty. I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus the Judge, never blush for the witness you bear of our Lord nor for me his prisoner; preach Christ, be urgent in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with tireless patience, herald the glad tidings, complete your service as God's steward."

What did Paul want completed? What are the essentials of a complete ministry? An analysis of these pastoral letters makes clear at least four things: Furnishing, Timeliness, Personality, and Supernaturalness, or Having, Doing, Giving, and Being. The making of good ministers of Jesus Christ approaches the glory of fine art, yet fledglings may fly out of a seminary even today. Scripture given that we may be complete, thoroughly equipped for all good work, is full of inspiring ideas and ideals and also is full of definite truths, ethical, moral, political, social, and humane. Close study makes these our own, and since we deal with sins as well as sin, we have truths as well as truth. Ologies and isms are here not ticketed and barnacled as we

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know them, still less exalted above the gospel, and also warnings as to science falsely so called.

Make sure of truth,  
And truth will make thee sure;  
It will not shift nor fade nor die.  
But like the heavens endure.

Timothy, a pastor in Ephesus, beautiful as any of our own cities and worse than any American city—a young man well fitted to the work—Paul seeks for him a higher training. Hence the figures, soldier, racer, wrestler, and farmer follow each other quickly: that he be brave, inured to hardship, skilful, patient, and persistent in toil. We cannot be good ministers of Christ without superhuman effort. Paul follows Jesus in not hiding the facts, but puts persecutions and trials squarely before Timothy and says “suffer hardship” three times within a few score lines. He must be no dress-parade soldier but a real man, ready to war a good warfare in the market-place or the arena as well as in the synagogue or assembly.

The elements, the relations, the aspects of our nature as religious, is our sphere; the soul, its constitution, its hindrances, its destinies, is our sphere; the awful certainties of heaven and earth and hell is our sphere.

Who would rush into such a service before he is sent? What calling justifies a longer apprenticeship? Yet name one into which some types of

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men crowd themselves more hastily. Happy is Timothy to be trained by one who knows the qualifications and exalts them in his own person. Paul recounts prophecies and special gifts—the unfeigned faith, good conscience, and nurture under choicest teachers from childhood—urges him to abide in the things learned, to hold fast his convictions, and to be strong in Christ. On such foundations build courage, diligence, health, and purity, enjoy reading and meditation, preach as a man approved of God, a workman not abashed who rightly divides the word of truth, and as a citizen be an example to all other citizens in conduct, in faith, in love, and in valor.

Timothy, the opposite of those who, ever learning, never know the truth, is open-minded—the normal attitude of true preachers. The open mind, the pure heart, finds God, walks with him, and is transformed into the glory of his own image. Love the truth, seek the truth, do the truth with every window open toward Jerusalem is an apostolic formula for power, a divine statute of survival; and the world needs such a truth-loving ministry today more than ever. Welcome the critics, who may have keener minds, though without honest love of the truth they are not surer guides. Luther would lose himself for the truth; Erasmus would lose the truth for himself. Luther the duller is the truer; and passing by the scholar we pay tribute to the monk who loved the truth.



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Be noble! and the nobleness that lies  
In other men, sleeping but never dead,  
Shall rise in majesty to meet thine own.

The differences of the divine library show the differences of the writers and of their times, for every age has its own birthmarks. The prophet of old, first a preacher to his own generation, has therein the hiding of his power; rightly to divide the word of truth is to drive the ploughshare in straight furrows; it is that ministers, rightly to apply Christianity, must know the signs of the times.

It is a day of drift; now hard by rocks of the Unknowable, and now by blast furnaces of the spiritistic all-knowable. It is a day of surprises, a day of swing; many not rooted are swept like chaff before winds of doctrine. Men swing from the unknowable to infallibility in the morning, from unbelief to sacerdotalism at noon, and from materialism to spiritism at night; they have no anchorage. Oceans have both surface and deeper currents; there is also a drift to ethics and morals and spirituality, and the dismal science becomes a moral science. Wholesome is the drift from theories to things, from philosophies to facts and the deep hunger for God. John, disciple of the inner life who gives us the heart of Jesus, begins his epistle with scientific proofs; the Word of life is the true God; hearing, seeing, handling, they know with joy the Eternal Life. This, followed by the deepest spiritual ex-



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periences, makes that epistle one of the best antidotes to some false teachings so popular today.

It is a chameleon-colored day with varieties of Christians and specimens of the varying types in the pulpit. Some Orientals holding their confessions and their flowing robes alike loosely, can hide reserved opinions or skip from one extreme to another at an hour's notice. Some windmill brethren, swirling the popular above the profitable, move with any wind as mists driven by a squall. Others scoff at what they are ignorant of, or are as hour-glass followers, more Galatian than Ephesian. Like people, like priest; the itching ears find preachers to tickle them.

It is a day of greed and scorn, of questions and pride of intellect, of vice and crime; men chant the praises of fog and canonize ignorance. It is a day of high fever; the speculative spirit seizes many in religion as in business. Such conditions and worse existed in Ephesus; hence Paul rouses Timothy to the difficulties as well as to the divine guidance in carrying out his ministry. Form and method have greatly changed in this twentieth century, but the greed and pride, the arrogance and idolatry even of that old city differently cloaked, curse our cities today. The truth and spirit with which Paul meets them, and with which we must meet them, are unchanged. He does not cry, "New lamps for old," but with new oil makes old lamps burn clearer and to send true light from that far-away day unto our

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eyes and hearts. Humanity has fallen, is fallen, and will fall, but even its derelicts and wrecks are above price. Paul would have Timothy a spiritual Great-heart to love men out of their sins.

Barnabas to save Antioch goes to Tarsus for Paul, the greatest service Barnabas ever rendered that city, his generation, the whole religious world of that time, and the Christianity of today. What journey is worth more for the world's well-being than that short trip? Barnabas is not only a son of consolation but a son of Issachar who knows what Israel ought to do. The gospel for all men and for all time that Paul developed at Antioch, is our present need. We can magnify it, for we know Christ, yesterday, today, and forever the same persistent personality, is adapted for and to be interpreted unto every creature. Every age needs a restatement of theological as of ethical views, for who serves not his own generation with fidelity will not truly serve any generation.

Some array creed against conduct, some exalt speculative thought above exact inquiry, and some exalt exact inquiry above the spiritual perception of truth. Timothy had such a fight, ministers have always to meet this kind, and Paul points the way to victory; but the war must be waged again and again. Christianity is practical, not speculative, not merely beautiful and helpful, but necessary to life. Man cannot live by bread alone. Timothy must bear with wrong thinkers and wrong-doers, in meekness

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and patience instruct them, for God may give them repentance, awake them to soberness, and clutch them out of the snares of demons.

Days of adversity are mothers of the highest faiths and forces; our God gives honey out of the rocks. Days of peril are days of opportunity and power and may be days of greatest hope. The crisis of the church is to the glory of the Christ. Clearer thinking, truer devotion, and stronger courage appear and increased assurance that the gospel of God is equal to the sin of any age. Ethics and ologies cannot change the carnal mind; but the Christ who died, the one cure for man's sin, is the power of God unto salvation to every believer. Mix nothing with truth when you preach, and mix nothing with the love of truth when you prepare. Study knowing that you and your hearers are born for eternity, preach knowing that you and your hearers have only today to live and that God will give the increase. Science and art, literature and philosophy may flourish, but sin will flourish more, and men fall because sin is the strong man. Feather your arrows but know that only the gospel of the glory of God conquers the strong man. "In all ages the men whose determinations are swayed by reference to the most distant ends, have been held to be possessed of the highest intelligence." Paul thirsts for the horizons of truth, and with a long look ahead taking in life and death and God, he indicates and illustrates the heart of the gospel.

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Preach the great truths; dabbling with pleasing texts may tempt men to build on sand, careless of underpinning until the storm is upon them. Scripture is full of great themes, and on such real meat great souls are fed. "Come to Jesus," "Only believe," are true, but are not a full gospel. "What must I do to be saved?" is good. "What must I do since I am saved to come to the full knowledge of the truth?" is better, for you are to bring men in to build them up. We are in no danger of becoming too well acquainted with the Bible, and he is best fitted to preach who never lets up in study. The great truth of the cross is God's holy love and the great gift of the cross is the Holy Spirit. When you have read your New Testament through for the thousandth time, the real marrow, the spirit and life of its uncounted treasures will enrich both mind and heart. The late beloved Dr. Henry G. Weston for a series of years read his Testament through every month; no wonder his mind was saturated, not only with the language, but with the deepest spirit of this priceless book.

Dramatic loyalty to truths may be rank disloyalty to the truth. The man who preaches continuously on the Second Advent is an Adventist, not a Baptist. Under obligation first to Christ as the Head, then to the churches we serve, then to the church of God and the world in which we live, Baptists have respect to the whole counsel of God. Have no fear of digging deep, know the worth both



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of influence and effluence, and convert your findings of doctrine into life.

Meet the demand of the age by a manly, spiritual, truth-loving ministry. The organist must know his instrument, himself, and the music, not to exhibit himself or the organ, but rightly to render the music set before him. The physician must know the disease and the remedy, but more the body in which both are at work. So we must know sin and the soul, our chief work not to make sermons but to save men. We must shun fables and old wives' mysteries, for ours is a daylight gospel, "the sunburst of a new morn come to earth," and truth like the sun will be its own witness. Milton is right, "the very essence of truth is plainness and brightness." Our own Dr. John A. Broadus was a prince of preachers, and pithy plainness was the pearl of his preaching. A little less ambition to be notable would be of vast benefit. Give fact and truth as God gives them; no scientist can add to the corn a new life germ, and a child's little finger may take from a plum the bloom that all the chemists in the land cannot restore. Give the gospel as God gives it, and the seed which is the word of God today will tomorrow be the children of God. The twentieth century cannot add to Christ's words of spirit and life.

Preach the word positively with the note of authority—the note, not the air of authority—do not play the priest before your people. The gospel of

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authority by a man of humility will bring forth grapes of Eschol. He who knows how to pray well preaches well, for we lose authority when we lose intimacy with Christ.

One "I know" of Paul outweighs a thousand of the best thinkers' "It may be." After fourteen days of storm and fog his "I believe God" gives the ship a new captain and the soldiers a new leader. A fiddler who strikes the right chord may bring down a metal bridge, but a man of faith may build up a bridge over which cowards marching become heroes. Truth clearly put in the heat of conviction sets in motion responsive chords in the soul for edification. We suffer from four things, unreality, uncertainty, satisfaction with ourselves, and unripeness, and we soon learn that a craven leader cannot have a brave following. Have faith in God and courage; like begets like, and for this we are given the spirit of power and of love and of self-control. Faith's witness is activity; nothing so manifests its special qualities as intercession, for the patience, the obedience, and the victory of faith are written large in prayer for others. True prayer, real fellowship with Christ, the touch of his spirit with our spirits, the direct inreach of his being brooding over our being, will give us courage to face Satan himself and not flinch.

Give the truth its spiritual and practical use. Granite rocks are pierced by drills faced with small diamonds, and hard hearts may be pierced when we

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face our message with clear truth. Truth, mark you, not on the right or the left or in the middle of the road, but as truth is in Jesus. David winced when Nathan said, "Thou art the man." Our Scripture is for right thinking, yet more for right living, its truths real and quickening, indeed, but of full worth when they draw us near to God and grow the fruit of lives pleasing to him. The message must burn our own souls if we would set others afire with zeal or hear them say, "Did not our hearts burn within us when he opened to us the Scriptures?"

Do not ask a hundred people to give you thirty minutes each, and then give them an aimless palaver or a shower of verbal pyrotechnics, for you would rob both God and man. We may waste fifty hours in one service hour, and we who hide ourselves behind a manuscript should recall Dr. William R. Williams' saying: "There is extemporaneous writing as well as extemporaneous speaking." Do your own thinking and think thoroughly if you would save your hearers from mental marasmus. Sheep kept lean by baled hay will thrive on fresh-mown hay cut from the field of your experience. Compositors might set up and proof-readers go through the entire New Testament and be nothing bettered. One man saying, "I was blind and now I see," and a beggar, once lame but now healed, were stronger in testimony for Christ than all the strength of opposition to him in the Sanhedrin.



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Living personality is emphasized: Thee, Thy, Thou. Timothy must stand in his own shoes and accomplish his own ministry; he must guard what he has, keep himself pure, be sober, be urgent, and kindle the gift entrusted to him. No one moves another himself unmoved, and no minister changes the beliefs or doings of men without deep soul convictions. We must be something more than bank-tellers paying out other people's money. Is Jesus removed from us by nineteen centuries, or is he born in us and living in us the life we live today? Whoso preaches Christ must have Christ's life and Christ's character, be a true light-bearer and a real life-giver. *Jesus lives*; it is not an influence or spiritual process; his whole ministry is a personal fact and truth today when everything tends to break down personality. Mass movements and group movements and block movements are undoubtedly doing good, but the individual must not be crushed into dust and the idea of his personal accountability pounded out of him.

Give yourself your own soul, your own gifts, the coin minted in your own mind; but do not fall in love with your own phrase-making; your words at the best may be only as feather-tips for God's arrows. The true minister gives himself to his work; his body to weariness and to want if need be, his spirit parted among his people for their cheer and comfort. No stingy self-reserve, no prudential economy can we practise if we would do full service

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for God. An educated man is an invincible force when unconditionally surrendered to Christ; but a man absorbed in himself will not only have a fool for his friend, and a poor one at that, but be as empty of power as a soap-bubble; he is most empty usually who is most full of himself.

The vessel of honor of wood or gold is one sanctified unto Christ alone. Who gives himself with all his might through all his life to all that God has entrusted to him, absorbed in the one work laid upon him with a self-devotion that involves his entire being, is the true minister. As the iron in the fire and the fire in the iron give white heat, so with him in the light and the light in him, men will walk in his light as a man of God fully furnished. Lamps give light, and the light glorifies the lamp. The pagan was right who begged for men of hot hearts to tell of Jesus' love; for then our words will flow and burn like molten lava, and our lips will be as if touched with coals of fire.

Conviction and consecration, action and discipline, are all emphasized by Paul. Aggressive and continuous urgency must attest Timothy's zeal in service. Christian ministers should be the best evidences of Christianity, epistles read and known of all men, large-type Christians, that he who runs may read. We may never equal Timothy; but making the best of ourselves as true witnesses of the living Christ we may become own brothers of Paul and Timothy.

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We must be true to ourselves for the sake of honesty. As soon steal another's false teeth or his wig as his gestures or the tones of his voice. Spurgeon, Beecher, Brooks, and others have been unwilling models for many stuffed figures in our pulpits, but how can the bond-slaves of corruption give liberty to men? Paul does not urge Timothy to be original; a reputation for originality is often cheaply won, as we may see in the performances of some ministers and some evangelists. We may seem to make poor gold-leaf; but if it is the best we can make, and we have beaten it out ourselves, it will be of more worth to the Lord and to the people, not to say to ourselves also, than any we can steal. Let us be true to ourselves for growth; not height, but holiness we need; not place, but the real fire from God. As examples to believers in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity we should be what we would have others become, for the work of God in a man is the man.

Those honors

Which are without . . . place, riches, favor,  
Prizes of accident as of merit,

come and go with the seasons. "He wrote much, but said little" no one could affirm of Paul. The light not born of earth or sea shines through all his letters, for when the world was lowest morally he preached and practised highest ideals and truths. Few authors are better known, and no human has

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contributed more for the welfare of the world than he to whom the thing to be done became a part of his being and it must be done or he could not live.

Timothy's ministry is supernatural; called of God unto grace and authority, he credentials the gospel in his own person and work. Ambassadors for Christ have dignity enough in divine authority, at once our warrant and our fitness for the work and our pledge of victory in it. As well try to educate mummies as to train unregenerate men for Christ's ministry.

He must speak  
Who calls for things that are not, and they come.  
The transformation of apostate man  
From fool to wise, from earthly to divine  
Is work for him who made him.

The theology of the future will center in the leadership of Christ and the dominance of the spiritual; above everything else it will emphasize the supernatural. Lamps without light, trees without fruit, fields without grass may abound, but never a ministry of power without the Spirit. Nebuchadrezzar's great image sank down from gold to clay; so the ministry sinks from the apostolic practice to that of many pretended successors. The image had the form of a man, and the good or the evil of the world is by or because of a man. Truth crushed to earth rises again when the man arises whom God has trusted to pick it up; so Luther and many others glorify anew a spiritual ministry. Again to the

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great image; the one mediator is the man Christ Jesus, to his own generation but clay, a good man but of Nazareth. Since then he lives and grows from clay to gold day by day, he the Coming Man and we his ministers, his servants "in Christ," grow with him. Called of God as Moses was and Paul, we must have the message, not in a book which may be a form empty as a chrysalis shell, but in our own souls as spirit and life. We must know it, love it, give it fully, and above all we must be the message. To us is entrusted the gospel of the glory of the happy God, and in us is to be witnessed its triumph. We find his gospel in his works, in his words, but more in himself; and we his messengers after works and words must be in person his message. It is too easy to cry at us, "Heal thyself"; if we do not show the power of God to subdue sin in our own souls, how can we bring men to trust God? The best do best, for being is the measure of doing, especially in the ministry of Christ, and he serves best who is most meek and lowly in heart.

Timothy, keep yourself pure; only so can you bless an impure world, only so can you show your life-power comes down from above, only so can you lift men up to God. Gifts and graces, pulpits, churches, and Bibles are instruments to this end, that we save ourselves and others also.

Feed with the word, but oh, far more  
Feed with a holy life.



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Our lives begin in a miracle, for Christ is born in us, and lead back to the miracle of miracles, to him who was dead and is alive again. Unless he lives in me I have no warrant to speak for him and no power to reveal him to others. The clouds that become the sun's chariots show the sun's glory. God is not afraid of paradoxes; we alone truly live who have been crucified with Christ, and our "life under God is now one grand paradox of dependence and liberty." Power is in Christ; not in something he says or does, but in him is the power of God to subdue and to save. "Christ is infinite spiritual energy in constant action." Three dominant sayings, and all touching our ministry, are given twice each; the work and its definite point—"preach the gospel to the poor"; the work and its supply—"pray the Lord of the harvest for laborers"; the work and its equipment—"As the Father sent me, I send you, receive ye the Holy Spirit." Hugh Miller is right, "Ministers when real are special creations of the grace of God."

It is a royal privilege to live in such an age as this. An age of doubt? Bury it under the victory of faith that overcomes the world. An age of questions? Welcome, stimulate, and answer them out of our Bible and our own souls. Never fear when we have an open Bible between ourselves and our questioner. An age of half-truths? Let our light shine and give them the truth as truth is in Jesus. An age of war? Thank God, to be a good

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soldier of Jesus Christ is not an empty phrase. Keep down fears by keeping up crystalline faith and courage. Timothy, do not think of my chains; they are not worth thinking about; be brave, stand up straight, and fight face forward.

Hopes have precarious life;  
They are blighted, withered, snapped short off  
In vigorous youth, and turned to rottenness;  
But faithfulness can feed on suffering,  
And knows no disappointment.

Covet a full, round ministry, now preacher, now teacher, now pastor, now evangelist, and in all a true shepherd. Forego no portion of your service. Be as ready to herald as to teach, to train as to evangelize, and so accomplish your ministry, Timothy. The path of honor ascends from among our every-day duties. Jesus was great, not in science or art or politics, but in religion, and here his greatness arises out of all-round service to God and humanity. "Never man so spake!" True, and this speaking was in the ordinary affairs faced from day to day and in the main among the common people. We are lured by the extraordinary, but the ordinary is the most needful; to cheer the heart, to guide the conduct, to appreciate men and share comradeship with them, is worth more than logic or fine writing or epigrams flung at them from the desk. Much power and great joy will come from doing well the common duties of every day.



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Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou livest,  
Live well, how long or short permit to heaven.

He comes to be ruler over many things who is faithful in that which is least. We ministers have the right to account ourselves the most highly honored of men, as we ought to be on earth or in heaven the happiest of men. Greater honor than the prime minister of the proudest nation have we as ambassadors of the King of kings. The Judaistic Jehovah was no match for the Roman Jupiter; but Jesus Christ, the image of the invisible God, is more than a match for Roman law and power. It was not boasting that led Paul to say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

All great actions reveal at length  
Ungessed resources of lowly strength.

We who are "the heirs of all the ages" wear the highest honors ever conferred upon men in that we may live and serve at the apex of all the opportunities and joys known to humanity. It is greater to preach Christ now than in any age of the world's history. Moral earnestness and real religion are more alive today than in any day I have ever known, and I had rather be a minister of the gospel of God than hold any other position to which I could be called.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I was ordained as pastor of the First Baptist Church, Perth Amboy, N. J., June 12, 1862.

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Paul and Nero; the slave of Christ and the tool of the Antichrist; the veteran with the marks of his Master like a general who bares his bosom that his soldiers may see the scars of his wounds and the tyrant who is the crown and flower of vice and guilt; the ambassador of Christ and the deified autocrat of paganism; he who being poor made many rich and the incarnate Nemesis of degradation, these two from other realms look back to earth. Upon that mighty kingdom whose throne Nero dishonored the sun has set forever; but the Sun of Righteousness arises forever upon Paul's poor saints whom he led into the kingdom and patience of Jesus. Not even David can bless God for his throne and kingdom as a minister from his pulpit and pastorate may cry out, "I am thankful to Him who made me strong—even Christ Jesus our Lord—because He has judged me to be faithful, and has put me into his service."



IV

DIVINE METHODS IN HUMAN  
REDEMPTION



## DIVINE METHODS IN HUMAN REDEMPTION<sup>1</sup>

As one who gazed on the Invisible God, he (Moses) was unflinching. These, all these, were they who through that faith received tokens of God's approval, yet these did not actually receive the fulfilment of God's promise. Why so? Because God, with respect to us, looked onward to a higher blessing than was here attained by them, so that they might not reach that perfect state ere we could join them.—  
*(Translation by Arthur S. Way.)*

**T**O see God in the past but fail to see him today is the worst heresy. That "God has a plan, and that history is the working out of his plan in human affairs" Hebrews, not Hegel, first affirms.

To "open as an essay, move as a sermon, close as a letter," and maintain high literary excellence shows the master-hand of a religious genius. A prose poem aglow with ideals, rich in gems as a diamond pocket, transparent in theme and course of thought, its treasures enhance its timeliness.

Days when Scriptures and symbols are as an empty chrysalis, mildew stains the purest rites, Moses decreases, Jesus increases, their granary become a grave, are dark days for God's elect.

<sup>1</sup> Given at the fiftieth anniversary of the Long Island Baptist Association, in Brooklyn, N. Y., October 17, 1916. The writer, a constituent member, is the only living incorporator.



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Christianity sweeps the lands "like a prairie fire," but Jews follow their nation's bier as mourners without hope, and Christian Jews, seeing the foundations sink under their feet, are in a strait whether to rush back to what is falling or to clutch at the hope set before them.

Hebrews traces the olive tree from root to fruit, gives triumph for defeat, and leads them to the city that has foundations. Like sweet waters in a bitter sea this reopens a fountain for the house of David, and the sinless Captain of Salvation, Pioneer and Perfector of faith, lifts them out of the fear of death into the life of love and service. Christianity fits the old Mosaism as the nick of an arrow fits the string of a bow, the second covenant unlocks the first, and the cross illumines their Scriptures and symbols. Israel's diadem crowns him who gives them more than the holiest found in the temple and does what Judaism could not do, "makes perfect."

It is a bold challenge for an unknown author to wreath the giants of Israel with new laurels, build a hall of fame for heroes rich toward God, and then deny them perfectness without himself and his associates. No second-hand scribe is he, but a true seer; no clock set by other clocks, but a sunlit dial. To him Christ is "The Apostle of God," from whom by vertical, not horizontal, lines is a true apostolic succession in the priesthood of believers. As soldiers capture a battery and turn its guns on their

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foes, so he turns arguments against Jesus into proofs of his greatness. He visions "the far-off divine event."

'Twas but a step from out our muddy street  
Of earth, on to the pavement all of pearl.

Yet he treats religion as a present need, not as a heavenly thing.

At home in history, rich in imagination, alert in logic, full of sympathy, and thinking in terms of humanity, he flings forth ideals and truths as big as the mind can grapple. We claim to think in world terms, but his world spans time and space, weaves into its tapestry all generations, leaps from the first earthly home to the eternal home of the household of God, and crams the entire survey into a sentence. Thought sags under low ideals, but ideals whose kernel is love to God and man lift thought to the nth degree, and truth not posited on time or place saves itself and its torch-bearer.

He emphasizes unity and perfectness for the redeemed, unity in constituency and service, its bond an organizing life. Abel, Enoch, and Noah in remote days; Abram, Moses, and David in early Israel; Peter, John, and Paul in later days, are bound into one bundle of life with God.

It is a zigzag hero line, and Baptist councils would not approve them all; yet as in the hilltop conference Moses and Elijah, Peter, James, and John, with Jesus in the midst, are one, so this

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richest cluster of God's jewels ever strung is in one chain. Pilgrim fathers on highlands of divine companionship, and multitudes yet to begin their pilgrimage, "the host above, below," vanguard and rearward, sowers and reapers, parents and children, in one comradeship move along the upward way.

. On they move  
Indissolubly firm; nor straitening vale, nor wood divides  
Their perfect ranks.

All wait until David the shepherd lad comes into the house; so will all wait until the last lost sheep is brought back to the household of God. Abel and Paul, Noah and John differ greatly as do lamb and tiger, dove and elephant, but God is justified of his children. There is no room for doubt that the ideals of one bread, one body, one fold, and one bride are real entities. Come down, and we will believe," his foes shouted; he did more; he came up from the grave. "Go tell my disciples and Peter" knits them into oneness. Man, the pearl of great price, drew him down, for God sees more in us than we see in ourselves, and he is satisfied when man is made new in the perfect image and likeness of the Father. Is everything going to smash, is the mystery of life to end in "the ashes of moral defeat"? Look higher to see how God uses the world's waste as raw material for sonship,

to angel his new heaven  
Explores the lowest hell.

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“Bezaleel, the brazier, may have been rated above Aaron the priest,” Bushnell says, adding, “and I really think he was.” Who ever came nearer being rated with Shakespeare than Bunyan, the tinker?

“The religious phenomena of life transcend all human science,” for finites, fired by immutable ideas and truths, feed on the infinite and love mortal things with the zest of natures immortal. “Looking before and after”—knowledge and faith to him, thoroughfares, not blind alleys—wise in appraising the near and sane in weighing the remote, he enriches the old by the new, and knows both so well he dares forecast the future. A prophet artist, his sketch, both ample and sublime, opens a rift in the cloud and lo! their glory streams through who with shackled hands salute the promises. Who feared

not the hungry fire,  
With its caverns of burning light,

now shine without spot or wrinkle. They wore their pains like roses as they went up to God. “God’s own have the perfectness which he engages to secure, for God no more makes half a promise than tailors make half a pair of trousers. Those of whom the world was not worthy are

Like wild myrtles, which preserve  
Their hoard of perfumes for the dying hour  
When rudeness crushes them.

The Lord’s trees, the big sequoias set between the shoulders of the mountains, wrestle with storm and

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tempest, defy cold and heat, sink their roots deep into the fastnesses of the rocks, and grow hardy by every conflict. So God builds great souls. Hazards and perils, denials and betrayals, bitter persecutions, fire and sword are his tools to carve beauty and strength of character. When mummies clamor for new clothes, Vanity Fair bargain-counters may sell ready-made character. "Let him slay me if he do but reign"—a proud mother's word is chaff beside God's word, "Though he slay me yet will I trust in him." Satan still sifts wheat and beats out harvests of golden grain for the barn floor of the Lord. Bonds out of Christ bitter as gall are bitter-sweet in Christ, for sufferings may be "the scabbards of the sword of the Spirit." To suffer with him is to reign with him who is made perfect through suffering. A saint is a soldier, not a paste-board man in a painted world. God burns in his hall-mark, and the many sons brought to glory bear the owner's brand.

Completeness is in Christ; the Father's perfect Son is humanity's perfect man. Smoothness and beauty in the sea of glass prove it is mingled with fire. Who walk with Christ on that sea are white like crystal, for they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. In the transfiguration, glory shone through his garments, and so they, all pure within, must wear white. Resistless as the river in the ocean God's purposes sweep us on to our desired haven in Christ.



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God's goodness flows around our incompleteness,  
Round our restlessness his rest.

God provides the better things for us, working out his own good pleasure by life and death, men and nations, races and ages, the past and the untrodden future, alike too holy to do wrong and too mighty to lean on helpers. He moves on circles so great it takes many centuries filled with the countless deeds of countless men to finish any design of his. He "notches the nations' calendars," yokes up the pagan powers as hewers of wood and drawers of water for his kingdom, times all events to honor Christ, and skips no least detail of life in nature or in man. Lily's growth and sparrow's fall, Abram, his altar-building and his servant's dress, Egypt and the bulrush boat for the boy, Jeremiah, also the rags for his arms when drawn out of the pit, concern God who gleans field corners, gathers fragments, and makes all things work together for good. No man or event is viewed apart from the whole plan of God.

Cargoes of circumstances and freight-trains of mud invoiced "Progress," blind captains using knowledge to deceive and religion to destroy, whole armies and great nations, have tumbled into the gulf of oblivion. A few Pharaohs and Neros with "mouth of iron and heart of lead, wielding a king's power with a slave's spirit," history gibbets to show that bad men are not the fruit of modern days.



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If Stephen dies, fear not; Paul girt with more than a double portion of his spirit rises to carry the cross onward. If Judas walks free "with the silver in his hands," fear not, "God holds the reins over the devil's coursers." We also, more than conquerors, are to see enemies fall as lightning till "as a god self-slain on his own strange altar, Death lies dead."

When their sufferings were as if hell's geysers leaped up to meet the overturned vials of heaven's wrath, into the furnace fire as into molten wax God set a new seal of Messiahship, whose enemies should become the footstool of his feet, and transformed the tongues of flame into pentecostal tongues for the spread of his gospel through the Roman Empire. The quaking mountain at whose foot Moses and his people trembled, would become a mere incident in contrast with the rocking to and fro of earth and heaven for the bringing in of the kingdom which could not be shaken, and in the height of the storm the author of Hebrews sings a song of triumph unto the Christ of God, "the same yesterday, today, and forever." In the heart of a cyclone it is said there is a perfect calm; so when the storm sweeps over us and the deck dips and rises as if it would shake itself free and cast us into the deep, the mind is calm, knowing that the chief things cannot be moved, and to these we cling till the tempest has spent its fury and passed us by.

The ideal, the lodestone of the heart, becomes the actual joy of the life, hope anchor's within the veil,

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and faith claims the future as the experience of the present. While in the body pent we who believe do enter into rest, come to the New Jerusalem, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. Gustavus Adolphus, leading the German Protestants, saying, "Henceforth there remains no rest for me save that which is eternal," enters into the rest of God. "All the world's masters feel the tug of the future and greet the unseen with a cheer."

History, experience, and reason are warp and woof for the author, who, with clear brain and warm heart weaves his great design. He shows the hidden springs of power that moved the giants of old, exalts the obedience and victory of their faith, clothes a great literature in the thought of his time, paints the nation's progress in true perspective, reveals the new life Christ has given, and converts the whole into meat and drink for the men of his day while before and behind at the center and on every side is "the living God," as he fondly calls him.

From shore sand to star-dust, from atoms to angels, the universe is ablaze with God. "The more the heart is crowded with God's presence, the greater room there is for more of his presence and for all the things in which God is concerned." To change a hero's word who gave his life for his people, we cry: "Make room for God! Make room for God!" Some words are overworked. "Problem" is such a word. The one world's problem, our greatest need, is to know God; it is life eternal to

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know God and Jesus Christ. What God is and what man should be is the sum of revelation. But how may God be known?"

We know each other through mutual self-revelation and mutual self-surrender and mutual cooperation in the highest things. Luther's wedding-ring may illustrate the three; it was engraved: "Martin-Katherine. Each for the other. Both for God." Turn back the pages to the law of the altar-fire, "It shall not go out," and every synagogue witnesses that he who gave the order lives today. Shall God be less alive to us? In that fire as in the fire of the bush that saved Moses are first the natural constituents, light, heat, and motion; then the spiritual elements, for light, heat, and motion spell Vision, Passion, and Action.

What hinders us from knowing God? Ignorance and sin. But to remove these Christ is the Light of the world and the Lamb of God. *The vision* of the unseen bears fruit in truest lives and purest deeds, but every man must see the invisible for himself. Shall Moses defy the king whom he sees for the King whom he cannot see, and God be less alive to us?

Not more light we ask, O God,  
But eyes to see what is.

Unseen forces the mightiest known we have the fatal power to hinder. Countless waves of light bathe the eyes, but the optic nerve limits what we

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use; so we limit God's impact on the soul. We need to cry: "Open thou mine eyes; let me behold thy wondrous works."

The vision's intenseness imperils its fulness and tempts us to shrink its volume into "the thimble of our capacity." A view of God brings larger views of truth and warmer love for truth, more desire to know, and more courage to do, his will. Connect the richer views of life with the larger views of God, or you pay the cost of unreality in religion and of death-damp in society. In a Hoffman painting Christ has the upward look with the downward reach; having these with shining faces, warm hearts, and strong arms, we could meet and move men.

Men who assert that the church is passé have not seen God. As another says, "When the blue fades out of the sky, the mountains drink up the sea, the heat of the sun freezes in, and God's purposing will breaks down," then may the church go down and out. Yet to look around us we may well ask, "Do our cities need an altar 'To an unknown God'?" Men who know God would not spend a Sunday morning stealing and destroying milk being sent for the needs of a great city. Shall not the God of Nineveh hear the cry of the children robbed of their food? Men who know God will not give up their work and then kill men who are willing to work. When men to whom we trust our lives in the cars must work behind iron bars to fend off death, we may well ask, "Have the Goths and the

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Vandals come to destroy our civilization?" A welter of blood across the sea and here a holocaust of crime and death startling this generation seem to show that God is unknown.

Vision first; then *Passion*. God loves and hates; until we know him as a consuming fire we do not know him at all. Back of life, as back of war, passions burn or principles shine, and what is may bring to pass what ought to be.

Law and goodness, love and force,  
Are wedded fast beyond divorce.

Science and art, education and philosophy, commerce and industry, law and politics, national or international, are allies of God's kingdom, and they will shine when touched with religious passion as the sun-flushed clouds of the western sky. "The great ideals are Christian ideals, and the greatest scientific study of the world is within the rim of the religious life."

Lowell said, "There is enough dynamite in the New Testament to blow all our institutions into instruments of the kingdom of God if rightly applied." True, and the answer is that the gospel of God has "power enough to transform our institutions into instruments of the kingdom of God if rightly applied." Contact is as necessary to the car as the power-house, and truth to have its full force must be incarnate in life. We sorely need deep moral energy and conviction; correcting the fathers' faults



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at the cost of losing their virtues is a poor exchange. Splendidly organized, we need the dynamic of passion for Christ and man to achieve our tasks. Clothe concepts of God in terms of the present, and translate the love of Christ into the love of the race to serve the men of today, for spiritual truth unresponsive to its age stings itself to death. When our hearts burn within us as he talks with us by the way, our blood earnestness will win men. It will do us good to take ship with Paul and hear him cry out in the night, "I believe God, and it shall be as he hath said."

Beside Raphael's "Transfiguration" paint "The Next Hour," when Christ at the foot of the mountain makes whole the demented boy. We may be too busy to pray, and too selfish to sacrifice for the unsaved, so busy trying to understand God that we neglect to love and serve him.

Shall the Hebrew singer who chanted, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me," have God nearer than you and I? Shall he who sang, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations," have vision and passion to find in God a home that you and I do not share? Vision and passion decaying, mind and heart are starved, then lost, and only an empty form is left. Said one, "My mother's living presence nerves me every day." Many of us who respond to that should say with deeper passion, "The reality of God's presence girds me every hour."



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Earth's crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush aflame with God;  
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;  
The rest sit round it, and pick blackberries.

Are we berry-pickers or God's seers? The man "without passion for God not worth his weight in dust" may be worth his weight in gold if God truly abides in him. Passion for righteousness, truth, and law are not by-products of faith.

Fine gold has not perished when the flame  
Seizes upon it with consuming glow.

Vision soon grows into vocation, and passion into *Power*. It takes a Paul to triumph over a thorn in the flesh and to withstand Peter to his face. God does not give blue-prints for the house we build on the rock or logarithms to check up each day of life's journey; it is enough to say, "Lo, I am with you all the days."

Who walks with God shuns the lines of least resistance, makes straight paths that the lame be not turned out of the way, climbs hills of difficulty, fights against every wrong and esteems the rebuke of God greater riches than the praises of friends. Who walks with God puts his purse-strings into the hands of his great Comrade, covets the hardest fields in which to work, and loiters not when he should labor, for spiritual indulgences may work more harm than those which Luther fought. Who

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walks with God in going about doing good will tread out with his feet all lines of separation, sectional, national, or racial, yet will be patient with others, remembering that while it took only forty hours to get Israel out of Egypt, it took more than forty years to get Egypt out of Israel.

Walking with God today must be under the conditions of life today; in the thick of affairs, amid the crowding and the cursing, through all the racket and the noise we may hear his voice and walk with him undisturbed if we will. Follow as did Caleb, believe as did Paul, endure as did Moses, and then in every church action and in every act of the association, without presuming we also may say, "It seemed good to us and to the Holy Spirit."

To sing psalms is good, to open playgrounds for the children may be better and a more immediate duty. Is God "covered with a cloud" so that your prayers cannot pass through? The cloud is born of the marshes at your feet; get out and clean up the marshes, and your prayers will get up to God. To prove that God lives in our religion today righteousness, love, and service must thrive in Wall Street and in every street. If we cannot show God at work in New York, volumes of proof that he was in Jerusalem will fail to create response. How God came to Abram means little if God does not come to us so that we can give him to the people whom we serve. If God speaks to us from some distant age only, we are done for.

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Granted that God is in our churches, some of us, like Jacob, seem not to know it until the meeting is over. To reach men God must be seen in our streets and shops. Jews kept windows open toward Jerusalem, and we must keep our windows open toward Brooklyn.

Judaism clinging to its great men seems foolish, but what if we cling to the founders of this Association, or of the churches in which we work, cling to their truths and ways? How are we better than the Jews? It is "love's labor lost" to put twentieth-century wine into first-century bottles. Hezekiah breaks Moses' serpent, Paul changes Moses' statutes, and we must welcome new truths.

The boom evangelists have now may become a bomb and gusts of feeling blow out lamps of reason. Pastors silent and churches closed for weeks to hear one man speak and have one big meeting! What about the promise to two or three "with Jesus in the midst"? Bring God to men, lift men to God, is every man's commission. Absorbed in the wheel's whirl at the circumference we may lose sight of the center.

Efficiency is our great word. Jesus says, "My Father works, and I work." What captain of industry puts in more hours a day than the Captain of our salvation? Write "holiness on the bells of the horses" and follow the mechanic who lived as "The Apostle of God!" Who now so walks and lives says, "For me to live is Christ to live."

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Modern ideals are here: the law of continuity—the universe not a chaos, but a cosmos founded in reason and truth, and “a survival of the individual personality after death in a form which makes possible the continuity of the connecting life.” Edison, Marconi could not stay the mighty forces God set free. When traitors try to shift the channels of the river of life,

Have faith in God,  
Calm and free from every care,  
On any shore since God is there.

Life, thought, truth, and ideals, God's gifts, abide amid all earth's changes. Men live and die, nations rise and fall, but “the one eternal purpose behind all history will move resistless as the flow of the tides, for the ultimate character of God as of the universe is to be judged by its final product.”

Who yields himself to God builds on an abiding foundation. Perish our things if deeds of service for Christ live. “The floweret may die, but the fruit scents the plain.”

Honor the things that were, honor more things that are, but highest honor to things that are to be. I believe that generations coming will surpass all gone before, and coming songs will reach triumphing notes man has never yet touched. Perfect your instruments and your singers, for future music will exceed our best. Each period must praise His work to the next in loftier scale of power.

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I look for more devotion, more revivals of pure religion, greater beneficence, and larger revealings of God. Blessed are you younger brethren who will see and share in such abundant life, from our Father. Where victory perches today means little; where the exhaustless riches are means everything. Vast the difference—having God on our side for a day and being on his side for time and eternity. To see darkly now, then to see him, is as a step from quest and glory. Some day

We shall behold Thee, face to face,  
O God, and in thy light retrace  
How in all we loved here, still wast thou.

I believe that the world, ever in his hands, is in his keeping now, that God who was with the men of old, is with us now, that he who spoke to them of his will and work, is speaking to us now, and that as he gave to them, so today he is giving to us many discoveries of his truth.

Here let us pause, our quest forego,  
Enough for us to feel and know  
That He in whom the cause and end,  
The past and future meet and blend,  
Speaks not alone of words of fate  
Which worlds destroy and worlds create;  
But whispers in my spirit's ear  
In tones of love or warning fear,  
A language none beside may hear.  
To Him from wanderings long and wild  
I come, an overwearied child.





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